

## **TRASH/RECYCLING COLLECTION Q & A**

Q: What is automated collection?

A: Automated collection is a relatively new but completely proven program for residential solid waste and recycling collection used by more municipalities as a cost effective option to the old manual collection program. Each home is provided with two special carts (64 Gallon Carts), one for trash and one for single stream recycling. The yellow lid denotes recycled waste while the solid green lid denotes municipal trash. Each home must place both carts at curbside on their designated collection day. The trash trucks are equipped with a lifting device, will lift, empty and return the cart to the same spot. The entire operation takes about 15 seconds per barrel to complete. The 64-gallon cart will hold up to 200 lbs. of trash and because of the size of the wheels are easy to roll to the curb.

Q: Why is the Town of Abington changing to automated trash collection?

A: Automated collection will increase efficiency of refuse collection while improving safety. Overall operation costs are reduced. Fewer trucks on municipal roads will consume less fuel, and produce lower emissions. Automated collection provides stable annual costs for collection while improving services. It will also improve recycling efforts and reduce the amount of refuse processed. Therefore, disposal costs are lowered. Recycling tonnage will increase making the program more environmentally friendly.

The Town of Abington provides the carts so there are no more trashcans to buy. The carts are maneuverable and easy to roll. Carts feature large wheels and do not need to be picked up and carried. Snug fitting lids are attached to the handle of the cart so they will not blow off or get lost. Carts are stable and will withstand winds from 43 to 50 miles per hour. Litter, odors, animal and fly problems are diminished.

Carts have smooth interior and exterior finishes for easy cleaning. They are uniform, attractive and contribute to tidy neighborhood appearance on collection day.

Each cart comes with a ten-year warranty.

Q: Do I need to bag my trash?

A: Yes, it is encouraged that all **trash** be bagged before it is put in the roll cart and left at curbside. Bagging keeps the cart clean and reduces wind-blown litter.

**With respect to the Single stream-recycling cart, residents do not have to bag single stream recycling items when placing them in the cart.** Cardboard boxes require residents to cut and break up the cardboard box to allow enough room in the cart for additional recycled items.

Q: I am a new resident in town. How do I get my carts?

A: Carts are purchased by the Town of Abington and are the property of the town. Carts belong to the residential address assigned to the cart. Each cart has a number and a scanner chip imbedded in the cart. When the cart is assigned to each eligible unit, which comprises one through three family units, legal in-law units and single properties with multiple units each building on the property is between one and three family units will be assigned carts.

There should be carts left by the previous occupant or owner. If there are no carts, please contact the Board of Health Office at 781-982-2119.

Current residents will have carts delivered directly to each unit eligible for services. Residents do not have to be home to receive the carts.

Q: How many carts will I get?

A: Each legal household unit, limited to one through three family units will receive one Abington Green colored cart with green lid for trash and one Abington Green colored cart with yellow lid for recycling free of charge.

Q: Who will own the carts?

A: The carts are owned by the Town of Abington. Residents are responsible for ensuring the cleanliness of the carts. If a resident moves, even if it is to another part of town, the cart stays with the address to which it has been assigned for the next resident to use.

Q: When is the program going to start?

A: JULY 1, 2012

Q: Can I use the cart before the automated collection begins?

A: **NO, YOU CANNOT.** The carts are too big to be emptied without the automated equipment.

Q: What is the policy for damaged carts?

- A: If the damage is the result of normal wear and tear (ex. Broken lid or wheel), the cart will be replaced without a charge. However, if the damage is due to abuse, there will be a charge to replace the carts. The Town of Abington's purchase price for the carts is \$42.34 each. All repairs and replacement will be handled through the Town of Abington.
- Q: My cart is dirty, can I get a replacement?
- A: The housekeeping and maintenance of the cart is the responsibility of the homeowner. If you bag all of your trash, maintenance is minor. An occasional washing with water and a little ammonia or disinfecting cleaner will help eliminate odors.
- Q: Can I use another container?
- A: No. Only the carts issued by the Town of Abington can be used. Trash left outside of the carts will not be collected, carts that are blocked or turned the wrong way cannot be emptied.
- Q: I do not have room for a cart. Can I continue to place my trash in bags curbside for collection?
- A: No. Only trash and recycling placed in the appropriate carts will be collected.
- Q: I live in a condominium complex, the town grandfathered my complex for trash collection, and will I receive this new service?
- A: No. All residential condominium associations will continue with dumpster service, those that were grandfathered will now be required to select a vendor to pick up the dumpster. The Town of Abington will not include the grandfathered condominiums in the new contract starting July 1, 2012. The town has pledged to work with the grandfathered condominiums to find price suitable alternatives to the town providing the service.
- Q: Why weren't the bags I placed on top of the cart lid collected?
- A: No waste is to be placed on the top of the automated container as it will fall off the container and leave a mess.
- Q: My cart wasn't completely emptied. Why?
- A: The automated container dumping process lifts the container up and when it's ready to empty turns the cart upside down and stops with a slight jolt so waste in the cart will fall out, unless it has been wedged, forced or compacted into the

container with some force. The heaviest items should be placed at the bottom of the cart.

Q: Will my cart be emptied if it is placed in the wrong spot?

A: During the first few collections, your cart will be emptied even if it is placed in the wrong spot. If you find your cart in a different location at the end of the collection day, please note where it is located and set out the cart in this new location in the future.

Q: What can I put in the cart for recycling?

A: Single stream recycling items must be placed in the yellow lid cart, the items include, cardboard, paper, newspaper, plastic bottles, cans, aluminum cans and any product with a recycling emblem number 1-5 and 7 can be placed in the yellow lid cart. Recycling number 6 is styrofoam cups, packages that are currently not recycled in Massachusetts.

Q: How do I dispose of yard waste?

A: With this new contract, yard waste will be picked up at curbside twice a year. Yard waste collection will occur, once in the spring and once in the fall. Dates and times will be sent to each household in advance, announcing when the collection dates will be for the spring and the fall. Yard waste can also be taken to the Compost Site on Groveland Street anytime during operating hours.

Christmas Trees will also be collected at curbside. This is a new feature of the waste collection contract along with yard waste collection. Advanced notification will be provided to each household. Collection information for yard waste and Christmas tree collection will also appear on the Official Town Website at [www.abingtonma.gov](http://www.abingtonma.gov).

Q: Can I put cardboard in the yellow lid cart?

A: Yes, To prevent cardboard from being jammed too tightly, the Town of Abington requests that you cut and flatten the cardboard so that the container can easily be emptied.

Q: How do Bulky Items and or large items get collected?

A: Bulky items will not fit in your cart. Collection of bulky items will cost \$35.00 per items and can be placed at curbside by notifying the waste hauler directly 1-800659-1501. Payment will be made directly to the waste hauler and a time arrange for pick-up with the hauler. Contact information will be provided once

the program is finalized. Such information will be obtained on the Official Town Website or through the Board of Health Office.

Q: Where should I put my cart?

A: Carts must be placed at least four feet from obstacles, such as utility poles, mailboxes, trees and parked cars. Carts must be within two feet of the curb edge. Carts must be placed at least three feet apart from each other. The cart handle must be located away from the street or to the rear of the cart with the bar facing the street. The Cart Handle CANNOT FACE THE FRONT.

Q: If I live down a dead end street, where should I place my cart?

A: All carts, recycling and trash carts must be placed on the left side of the street. The truck will back down the street and collect all carts on the left side of the street due to the left side mechanism.

Q: Why must the cart be placed in this manner?

A: The automated collection truck cannot turn the cart around as it picks it up. Dumping the container "backward" can break or damage the lid.

Q: Why do I need to provide space between the cart for recycling and the cart for trash as well as other items out for collection?

A: A different vehicle collects each item (trash and recycling) so access is important. Also, the collection arm on the automated truck requires space to make the collection safely so that it will not tip over other containers or damage your property. Please keep the containers away from mailboxes, fire hydrants, telephone poles and other obstacles that may interfere with the collection process.

Q: When should I put the carts out?

A: Your cart must be placed at the curb by 7:00 am. After your cart is emptied, remove it from the curb that day.

Q: What will happen during the holidays when I have excess trash?

A: If all of your trash will not fit into your cart, you can either ask a neighbor if they have room in their cart or you may have to hold non-perishable refuse (i.e. wrapping paper, boxes and packing material, which are recyclable) until the following week.

Q: What if my cart gets stolen?

A: The carts are the property of the Town of Abington and each one is assigned to a specific address. Each cart has an imbedded chip and serial number. All reports of theft will be investigated and should be reported to the Board of Health at 781-982-2119. Upon verification by the Police Department, stolen carts will be replaced at no charge to the resident. The Police Department is only verifying the cart was stolen, a prolonged investigation is not warranted. This process should take no longer than 24 hours at the most.

Q: What should I do with my old trash barrels?

A: Old trash barrels cannot be used for trash collection; however, they can be used to haul yard waste to the compost site on Groveland Street. Otherwise you can bring the barrels down to the compost site on Groveland Street.

Q: Won't the carts blow over more easily since they are larger?

A: The new automated carts are very stable. They have been tested to withstand wind gusts of 45 miles per hour when empty. In addition, the lids are attached to the handle and will not blow away.

Q: Where do I place my cart if there is a snow bank?

A: If the cart will not fit in the driveway opening then you will have to shovel an opening in the snow bank where the cart can be properly placed.

Q: Can the carts roll through Snow and Ice?

A: Yes it can, but there are limitations. You may have to clear a path to the curb. However, the wheels are large enough so you can wheel the cart through a decent amount of snow with some effort.

Q: Will you still pick up trash and recycling during inclement weather?

A: Routes maybe delayed due to inclement weather, but we will make every effort to collect your recycling and trash. When in doubt, have your trash out by 7:00 am on your designated collection day. If trash pick-up is canceled, your route will be picked up the next day.

Q: Do the automated carts have other benefits?

A: Yes they do, other than helping the town look neater, they help control rodents and other animal issues as well. They also keep moisture out which adds to solid waste disposal costs.

Q: I have a long driveway. Can I leave my cart at the Street?

A: You must make every effort to retrieve your cart after your trash has been picked up. However, on a case-by-case basis, the Health Department may make exceptions due to special circumstances. Only the Health Department can make that decision and all decisions are final.

Q: If I live on a major roadway with no curbing or sidewalk. Where should I put my cart without passing traffic damaging the carts?

A: If the shoulder of the road is wide enough, you can place the carts on the edge of the pavement of the road, with the front of the cart at the edge of the roadway. If not, you can either place it in your driveway opening or on your grass. Please make sure the cart is on stable, level ground where the truck can collect the cart.

Q: Why are we moving to this program?

A: The town will realize a substantial savings in the second year of the program, allowing the town to use those funds in other areas of the budget. More communities will move to automated pick-up. The Department of Environmental Protection wants communities to move to similar programs in future years.

Q: Will my pick-up day remain the same?

A: At this time, the Town of Abington does not anticipate time or route changes. However, program information, recycling information and contact information will be provided by the hauler and will be hooked in a plastic bag to the inside cover of either the recycling or trash cart upon delivery.